

Intelligence Brief

No. 1401 Date: April 26, 1953

State Dept. declassification & release

MOSCOW REAFFIRMS STANDARD SOVIET POSITION
IN REPLY TO PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S PEACE PROGRAM

Office of Intelligence Research

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 Date 3 FEB 81 Reviewer 01855

In a carefully worded editorial, Pravda on April 25 rejected President Eisenhower's program for the relaxation of East-West tensions. Although arguing Soviet readiness "for a serious business-like discussion of problems" and otherwise echoing familiar protestations of Moscow's peaceful intentions, the editorial gave no hint of a willingness on the part of the new Soviet rulers to compromise on any major issue. Instead it countered the several proposals put forward by the President with reaffirmation of standard Soviet demands. It also explicitly denied that in the Kremlin's view the President's proposals could be considered as indicating "in any way" a willingness on the part of the US "to take upon itself a just share" in an effort to solve "contentious international questions." The interest of Soviet leaders in proposals "truly aiming at peace," Pravda asserted, "does not mean that the Soviet leaders are prepared to accept new versions of old methods."

The emphasis placed on the speech by the editorial, as well as the fact that virtually the complete text of the speech was reprinted in Pravda were unusual but not unprecedented. Thus, former British Foreign Minister Morrison's letter to Pravda together with the MacMahon-Ribicoff resolution of friendship for the Russian people, and President Truman's accompanying letter, were reprinted in full in early August 1951. At that time, the British and American communications were accompanied by Pravda editorials reaffirming the Soviet position on the issues raised by the Western statements.

The editorial's tone matched its substance. While avoiding extreme and strident language, as is not unusual in statements of this kind, the editorial directly or indirectly repeated a large number of the stereotyped charges regarding past and present US policies and goals. Among others, it charged the US with "promoting war hysteria," continued use of "atomic diplomacy," "pursuing unattainable aims of world domination,"

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 available through April 26, 1953, by the
 Division of Research for USSR and Eastern
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efforts to establish a "revanchist," militarized West Germany, interference in the affairs of other nations, reliance on the Korean war to maintain business prosperity, utilization of the Marshall Plan and Point Four Program to secure domination of other countries, restrictive trade policies that benefitted the US to the detriment of other nations, violation of the UN Charter and use of the UN as a tool of US foreign policy. Breaking a precedent maintained by virtually all Soviet media since the inaugural on January 20, the editorial attacked a leading member of the new US administration by name. Secretary Dulles was strongly criticized for his April 19 speech following up the President's address. Employing characterizations of the Secretary reminiscent of those that preceded the election last November (e.g., "Dulles' martial inclinations have been well known for a long time," and "the belligerent pose so beloved by Dulles"), Pravda "agreed" with a statement allegedly made by British labor leader Strachey to the effect that the Secretary's speech was "an effort to convert Eisenhower's speech into an act of war."

The editorial avowed that there could be no question of a change in Soviet foreign policy, "the correctness of which has been proved by the entire course of international development." President Eisenhower's reference to the passing of an era with the death of Stalin was described as a "rather strange statement" and Pravda denied any intention to discuss the matter. It then proceeded, however, to argue that if "one connects the beginning or the end of an era with the appearance of new persons at the head of one state or another," it would be better to speak of the end of an era with the "advent to power of the Eisenhower government." "But," Pravda added, "the new United States President takes under his protection the whole policy of his predecessor."

The position taken on Germany was completely uncompromising, even threatening. Pravda left little doubt that the Kremlin still considers the German question the key problem in Europe. Unlike the earlier TASS report of the April 16 speech, it did not pretend that the President had entirely ignored Germany. However, it swept his points aside as "talk in general phrases." "Who," Pravda asked, "can be satisfied ... with such an approach to this question on the part of one or another state when ... the western part of Germany is simply considered as an instrument of its 'dynamic' foreign policy in Europe ..." The President was charged, like "the former US government," with not taking "into consideration the existence of the Potsdam agreements," and with giving in his speech "no basis for the solution of this [the German] question." Pravda then set forth what appears to be the most threatening line yet taken by Moscow in regard to the consequences of present US policy in Germany:

"If the Anglo-American bloc will not take this [the necessity of regarding the Potsdam agreement] into consider-

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ation, and continues further along its path of making impossible the national unification of Germany and turning its western part into a militaristic state in which power will remain in the hands of the revanchists, a fatal mistake will have been made, primarily in regard to the German people."

Pravda concluded with a reiteration of its own proposals for a settlement of the German question.

An equally flat position was taken with respect to the admission of Communist China to the UN and the restoration of "its lawful territorial rights, including the island of Taiwan." Pravda's position on Taiwan marked the first time in many months that this issue has been put forward as a condition for settlement in the Far East.

The President's demands for a change in the Soviet position regarding the East European satellites and Communist-engineered conflicts in Indochina and other parts of Asia were rejected out of hand. The Communist regimes in the satellites were said to have attained power "only by stubborn struggle." "It would be strange," Pravda asserted, "to expect the Soviet Union to interfere in favor of installing the reactionary regimes overthrown by the people." Pravda was equally disdainful of a call "upon the leadership of the Soviet Union to utilize its decisive influence in the Communist world so as to retard the liberation movement of the colonial and semicolonial people in Asia against their centuries-old oppression and enslavement."

No new light was thrown on Communist intention in Korea. The President's emphasis upon completion of a Korean truce as a necessary first step in achieving a general settlement produced only a reiteration of claims that the USSR has constantly striven for a peaceful settlement of the Korean question and the assertion that the USSR had immediately supported the "recent suggestion" of Communist China and North Korea "which gave a new chance of going from words to deeds, and which opened prospects for the end of the war in Korea."

The President's five-point disarmament program was completely discounted. Pravda noted that "the Soviet side, of course, does not object to the proposals laid down in these points." "However," it added, "all these proposals are of a too general nature which can in no way advance the complicated matter of armaments reduction."

The Soviet position on an Austrian treaty was also left unchanged. Pravda limited itself to saying that in the case of Austria "one can only repeat ... there is no question which cannot be solved on the basis of agreement reached previously, with genuine regard for the democratic rights of the Austrian people."

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The President's proposals concerning a world development fund and strengthening the United Nations were twisted so as to serve as reinforcements for familiar propaganda charges regarding the "imperialist" objectives of US aid and US abuse of the UN Charter. The editorial asserted that the fund suggestion "created the impression that we have here a new variant of the Marshall Plan, which has failed to justify itself, and at the same time continuation under a different name of Truman's unpopular Point Four, which by means of a pennyworth of alms to this or that weak state strives to subject the budgets and economies of separate countries and colonial territories, and also these countries and colonial territories themselves to the so-called 'dynamic aims' of United States foreign policy. Apparently the object now is to go still further along the same path." Only in case the nature of US aid programs were fundamentally changed, Pravda asserted, would a new, co-operative world-wide program be possible. In similar vein, Pravda contended that strengthening the UN would be easy if violations of its charter were eschewed, and if "no government should strive to convert the UN into a subsidiary organ of its own selfish policy." "It is not through the fault of the USSR," Pravda argued, "that this organization is not now fulfilling the tasks entrusted to it."

President Eisenhower's expression of concern over the burden of armaments were similarly perverted to fit into standard Soviet propaganda lines. Pravda charged that while the President "spoke about the vast expenditures of the United States Government" for various armaments, he did not forget to laud "the aggressive Atlantic Pact," the policy of which "means continuously greater, colossal military expenditures." Similarly, Pravda contended, the President failed to divulge many aspects of US armaments efforts, particularly the accumulation of A-bombs and the building of foreign military bases, which have "nothing in common with the interests of the defense of the United States." The totality of these efforts, Pravda said, "expresses the United States foreign policy line, pursuing unattainable aims of world domination."

Taken as a whole, Pravda's reaction would appear in fact, as the editorial itself asserted, to indicate that, for at least the time being, the new Soviet rulers have no intention of modifying the basic foreign policy lines followed by Stalin. Rather it appears to place the whole question of negotiation in a strictly Stalinist setting. The Pravda position, for example, would fit exactly into the tactical approach set forth in the last authoritative statement of Stalin's foreign policy concepts. This appeared in Kommunist for January 1953, under the title "J. V. Stalin's Speech at the 19th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Is a Program of Struggle for Peace, Democracy and Socialism." Here it was stated:

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The conditions which have determined the possibility of peaceful coexistence of the two systems in the past continue to operate also at the present time. The Soviet people are persistently struggling for the conversion of this possibility into reality. Marxism-Leninism teaches us that a possibility is not converted by itself into reality; an active struggle must be conducted for its realization. In order to convert the possibility of a peaceful coexistence of the two systems into reality, it is necessary to strengthen the country of socialism and the whole democratic camp with all possible means, to unmask the warmongers systematically, also to defend henceforth the policy of international collaboration based on the adoption of coordinated decisions to counterbalance the policy of dictation conducted by the American and British imperialists, to strengthen the ranks of the adherents of peace in the world, and to utilize ably the differences in the camp of the warmongers in order to frustrate their nefarious plans. However, that means that not the way of gifts to the aggressors and warmongers is to lead to success, but the way of decisive resistance to their aggressive intentions, the way of decisive unmasking of their base plans, and the way of mobilizing the masses for a struggle against these plans.

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